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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2015

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/70/474/Add.4)*]

70/215. Development cooperation with middle-income countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling that the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes, inter alia, that middle-income countries still face significant challenges to achieve sustainable development and that, in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, efforts to address ongoing challenges should be strengthened through the exchange of experiences, improved coordination and better and focused support of the United Nations development system, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and other stakeholders,

Reaffirming its resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

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Recalling its resolutions 63/223 of 19 December 2008, 64/208 of 21 December 2009, 66/212 of 22 December 2011 and 68/222 of 20 December 2013,

Taking note of the outcomes of the international conferences on development cooperation with middle-income countries held in Madrid on 1 and 2 March 2007,[1] in San Salvador on 3 and 4 October 2007,[2] in Windhoek from 4 to 6 August 2008[3] and in San José from 12 to 14 June 2013,[4]

Noting the regional conferences on development cooperation with middle-income countries held in Cairo on 11 and 12 March 2008, in Minsk on 16 and 17 May 2013, in Amman on 23 May 2013 and in Minsk on 23 and 24 April 2015,

Emphasizing that cohesive, nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks, will be at the heart of efforts by Member States, reiterating that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, highlighting the need to respect each country's policy space and leadership in the implementation of policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments, recognizing that national development efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment, including coherent and mutually supporting world trade, monetary and financial systems and strengthened and enhanced global economic governance, and highlighting the fact that processes to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally, as well as capacity-building, are also critical, including pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development,

Reaffirming that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of programme countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities are carried out for the benefit of programme countries, at their request and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

Emphasizing that there is no "one size fits all" approach to development and that development assistance by the United Nations development system should respond to the varying development needs of programme countries, including the development needs of middle-income countries, and should be aligned with their national development plans and strategies in accordance with its mandates, keeping in mind the needs of the least developed countries,

Noting that national averages based on criteria such as per capita income do not always reflect the actual particularities and development needs of middle-income countries and that, despite notable reductions in poverty, middle-income countries are still home to the majority of the world's people living in poverty and inequalities remain,

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[1] See A/62/71-E/2007/46, annex.

[2] See A/62/483-E/2007/90, annex.

[3] See A/C.2/63/3, annexes I and II.

[4] See A/C.2/68/5.

Recognizing that high degrees of inequality may contribute to vulnerability in middle-income countries and constrain sustainable development in many of those countries, and that economic growth needs to be sustained, inclusive and equitable,

Stressing that middle-income countries continue to face particular challenges related to, inter alia, job creation, the diversification and transformation of their economies and access to international markets and, in this regard, that efforts to create a national enabling environment for development should be complemented by a global enabling environment,

Recalling the resolve of Member States to enhance and strengthen domestic resource mobilization and fiscal space, including, where appropriate, through modernized tax systems, more efficient tax collection, the broadening of the tax base and the effective combating of tax evasion and capital flight, and reiterating that, while each country is responsible for its tax system, it is important to support national efforts in these areas by strengthening technical assistance and enhancing international cooperation and participation in addressing international tax matters,

Recognizing the need to better understand the multidimensional nature of development and poverty, and acknowledging the significant role that the United Nations system has played and should continue to play in this regard,

Reaffirming that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and in that regard reiterating the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies,

Expressing concern about the adverse impact and consequences of the world financial and economic crisis, including on development, and evidence of an uneven, fragile and slow recovery, cognizant that the global economy, notwithstanding significant efforts that helped to contain tail risks, improve financial market conditions and stability and sustain recovery, still remains in a challenging phase, with downside risks, including high volatility in global markets, falling commodity prices, high unemployment, particularly among young people, unsustainable debt in some countries and widespread fiscal strains, which pose challenges for global economic recovery and reflect the need for additional progress towards sustaining and rebalancing global demand, and stressing the need for continuing efforts to address systemic fragilities and imbalances and to reform and strengthen the international financial system while implementing the reforms agreed upon to date,

Stressing the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and that no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[5]

2. *Acknowledges* the efforts made and successes achieved by many middle-income countries in eradicating poverty and achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as their significant contribution to global and regional development and economic stability;

[5] A/70/227.

3. *Also acknowledges* that identifying structural gaps can improve the understanding of development needs of developing countries, including middle-income countries;

4. *Expresses concern* that some middle-income countries are highly indebted and face increased challenges to their long-term debt sustainability;

5. *Welcomes* the solidarity of middle-income countries with other developing countries, in particular the financial, technical, technology transfer and capacity-building support being provided by middle-income countries, particularly to the least developed countries, through South-South and triangular cooperation, while stressing that South-South cooperation is a complement to, and not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, and in this regard calls upon the United Nations development system to continue its ongoing efforts to mainstream support to South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation;

6. *Requests* the United Nations development system to ensure that it addresses the diverse development needs of middle-income countries in a coordinated manner through, inter alia, an accurate assessment of the national priorities and needs of these countries, taking into account the use of variables that go beyond per capita income criteria;

7. *Stresses*, in that regard, that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review negotiations in 2016 should give due consideration to ways in which the United Nations development system could improve its support to different country contexts, including how to provide efficient, effective, better-focused and better-coordinated support to middle-income countries in order to strengthen their efforts to overcome the significant challenges that they face in achieving sustainable development, and invites the Economic and Social Council to discuss, inter alia, concrete proposals to this effect in the ongoing process of dialogues of the Council on the long-term positioning of the United Nations development system;

8. *Calls upon* developed countries and developing countries members of the World Trade Organization declaring themselves in a position to do so to realize the timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all products originating from all the least developed countries, consistent with the decisions of the World Trade Organization, and also calls upon those countries to take steps to facilitate market access for products of the least developed countries, including by developing simple and transparent rules of origin applicable to imports from the least developed countries, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the members of the World Trade Organization at its Ninth Ministerial Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 7 December 2013;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the role of the private sector, as well as of the role of public-private partnerships, in meeting the challenges of sustainable development for middle-income countries and other developing countries;

10. *Also recognizes* that the creation, development and diffusion of innovations and new technologies and associated know-how, including the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, are powerful drivers of economic growth and sustainable development;

11. *Welcomes* the launch, by its resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, and looks forward to its expeditious operationalization;

12. *Recognizes* the great importance of providing trade-related capacity-building for developing countries, including African countries, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries, including for the promotion of regional economic integration and interconnectivity;

13. *Acknowledges* that good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels are essential for sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger;

14. *Recognizes* that middle-income countries still face significant challenges in achieving sustainable development and that, in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, efforts to address ongoing challenges should be strengthened through the exchange of experiences, improved coordination and better and focused support of the United Nations development system, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and other stakeholders, requests those stakeholders to ensure that the diverse and specific development needs of middle-income countries are appropriately considered and addressed, in a tailored fashion, in their relevant strategies and policies, with a view to promoting a coherent and comprehensive approach towards individual countries, and acknowledges that official development assistance and other forms of concessional financing are still important for a number of these countries and have a role to play in achieving targeted results, taking into account the specific needs of these countries;

15. *Encourages* shareholders in multilateral development banks to develop graduation policies that are sequenced, phased and gradual and to explore ways to ensure that their assistance best addresses the opportunities and challenges presented by the diverse circumstances of middle-income countries;

16. *Recognizes* that Governments will have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review at the national, regional and global levels in relation to the progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets and that quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind, and in this regard reiterates the commitment to intensify efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in developing countries, including middle-income countries;

17. *Recalls* paragraph 11 of its resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2013, and stresses that the concerns and specific challenges of middle-income countries should be given consideration, as appropriate, in the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

18. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include, under the item entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the sub-item entitled "Development cooperation with middle-income countries" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.

81st plenary meeting
22 December 2015